

**REMARKS**

**Status of the Application**

Claims 1-9 are all the claims that have been examined in the instant application. Claims 1-3 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Chang (U.S. Patent 6,619,777) in view of Kusunoki (U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2004/0017413). Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chang as modified by Kusunoki and further in view of Takahashi (U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2004/0056909) and Sekiguchi (U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2004/0090276). Claims 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chang as modified by Kusunoki and further in view of Kobayashi (U.S. 6,679,586). Claims 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chang as modified by Kusunoki and further in view of Hosono (U.S. 6,984,010).

**Preliminary Matters**

Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging acceptance of the drawings filed August 17, 2004 and also for acknowledging Applicant's claim to foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document.

**§103 Rejections**

A. *Claims 1-3 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Chang (U.S. Patent 6,619,777) in view of Kusunoki (U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2004/0017413).*

Claim 1 recites, in part, that the first drive subsignal associated with a first minimum area subjected to the liquid ejection and that the second drive subsignal is associated with a second minimum area subjected to the liquid ejection, which is different from the first minimum area. The Examiner concedes that Chang fails to teach or suggest that "each of the first drive subsignal

and the second drive subsignal is associated with a minimum area subjected to the liquid ejection.” See page 4 of the Office Action. However, the Examiner alleges that Kusunoki teaches this aspect of claim 1.

However, none of the references suggest that first drive subsignal is associated with a first minimum area, and the second drive subsignal is associated with a second minimum area. Because neither Chang nor Kusunoki teach or suggest these features, claim 1 is patentable over the applied art.

Claims 2 and 3 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1.

Claim 9 recites similar limitations to claim 1, and is thereby patentable for reasons analogous to those presented with respect to claim 1.

*B. Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chang as modified by Kusunoki and further in view of Takahashi (U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2004/0056909) and Sekiguchi (U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2004/0090276).*

Claim 4 is dependent from claim 1. Because Chang and Kusunoki fail to teach or suggest all of the elements of claim 1, and because Takahashi and Sekiguchi fail to cure the defects noted with respect to claim 1, claim 4 is patentable over the applied art.

*C. Claims 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chang as modified by Kusunoki and further in view of Kobayashi (U.S. 6,679,586).*

Claims 5 and 6 are dependent from claim 1. Because Chang and Kusunoki fail to teach or suggest all of the elements of claim 1, and because Kobayashi fails to cure the defects noted with respect to claim 1, claims 5 and 6 are patentable over the applied art.

*D. Claims 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chang as modified by Kusunoki and further in view of Hosono (U.S. 6,984,010).*

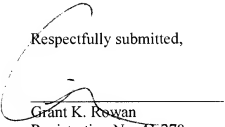
Claim 7 and 8 are dependent from claim 1. Because Chang and Kusunoki fail to teach or suggest all of the elements of claim 1, and because Hosono fails to cure the defects noted with respect to claim 1, claims 7 and 8 are patentable over the applied art.

**Conclusion**

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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